DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 167 105 IR 006 794

TITLE	VERB: Resource Base of Materials Uniquely Suited to Rural Schools and Low Budgets. Final Report.
INSTITUTION	Vermont State Dept. of Education, Montpelier.
SPONS AGENCY	National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	Feb 78
NOTE	23p.; Best copy available
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Federal Aid; Indexes (Locators); Information Dissemination; *Information Systems; Instructional Aids; *Instructional Materials; Microfiche; *Public Schools; *Rural Schools; State Programs
IDENTIFIERS	*Vermont Educational Resource Base

ABSTRACT

Vermont was given a special purpose grant from NIE in 1976-1977 to develop a resource base of materials in education that are uniquely suited to rural schools and low budgets. The goals of establishing a resource system of materials, developing the accompanying indexing and retrieval processes, and publicizing the availability of its resources were reached, as well as a secondary objective of developing and implementing a training program for state department personnel in the utilization and dissemination of information. Two objectives were not met--the provision of computer search capabilities of other data bases, for financial reasons, and the development of a capacity building grant proposal due to insufficient data resources. (Author/JVP)

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VERB: Resource Base of Materials Uniquely Suited to Rural Schools and Low Budgets Final Report

Vermont: State Department of Education

Feb. 1978

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STATE OF VERMONT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
MONTPELIER
05602

February 3, 1978

Dr. Arch Steiner
Program Officer
National Institute of Education
1200 19th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20208

Dear Dr. Steiner:

Enclosed is a final report on the 1976-1977 Special Purpose Grant. With it should go an enthusiastic round of applause to NIE for making such an exciting and worthwhile year possible. There are many teachers who have now come to know your Institute through the good work it has funded up here. "Brought to you by the folks at NIE" may sound a trifle cute, but people have asked who made VERB possible and we've told them.

It was a unique year, and there are some very satisfying results. We have a resource base with valuable material in it that is being used by more teachers each month. The "swap" appears to be establishing itself.

A second aspect of this activity is the fact that we will be working with you under a new grant during 1978. We look forward to this continued association with you.

Sincerely,

Robert A. Withey, Commissioner
Department of Education

gm/

Enclosures

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FINAL REPORT ON

NIE SPECIAL PURPOSE GRANT 1976 - 1977

Vermont was given the opportunity through a Special Purpose Grant from NIE in 1976-1977 to develop a resource base of materials in education that are uniquely suited to rural schools and low budgets. Envisaged as a "planning" grant in a carefully designated pilot area, the activities of retrieval, review, abstracting and microfiching of resources, with the resulting index of available materials rapidly moved the project to the implementation stage.

In summary the Special Purpose Grant from NIE in 1976-1977 accomplished the following goals:

. established a print-based educational resource system of Vermont materials

. provided direct retrieval of classroom tested materials in Vermont

. provided potential dissemination media for Department in-house publications

. developed exchange media for grant-based activities and publications

. produced the first collection of 160 + materials whose authors were predominantly LEA personnel

. developed actual implementation of a State-made storage and retrieval system

. established a process for future retrieval, abstracting, microfiching and dissemination of resources.

Six resource collectors were actually retrieving, and reviewing classroom materials by mid-February of 1977. The Project Coordinator, who was hired in January 1977 after a two month hiatus without anyone in that position, spent the first two months organizing grant activities, coordinating the work of the collectors, and learning the operation of a microfiche data base. Within five months, the first seventy six materials, comprising classroom resources in language arts and reading activities, social studies and math for elementary grades were offered to Vermont teachers.

The contract for the six resource collectors terminated on July 1, 1977, and was renewed on November 1 for two of the

six individuals. Thus initial retrieval efforts spanned approximately six months, from January through June 30, 1977. (See attachment # 1)

The publication of the first VERB (Vermont Educational Resource Base) index meant that during the summer the Project Coordinator had actual "products" to offer those who attended workshops. No longer a word-of-mouth idea, people began to believe that there actually was a resource base of Vermont materials.

By September, interest and use of the "system" reflected a heavy schedule of in-service presentations on VERB.

Concurrently, awareness among Department Consultants as to the potential use of VERB among their separate constituencies grew. Right to Read leaders enthusiastically supported the concept of a microfiche "exchange" of language arts activities and monies were set aside to purchase microfiche readers for Reading programs. Career Education began to use the VERB resource base as a disseminator of materials. Vocational/Technical Education began to supply materials for VERB. Metric materials from Vermont Math Consultants were entered in VERB.

The criteria for acceptance of materials from classrooms was initially quite simple. Material had proved its success with Vermont school children in some measurable way, should have been in existence a year, and had to be self-explanatory. Each item was reviewed for content by the collector, each of whom had classroom teaching experience. Currently, a five member Review Committee is being established with the cooperation of the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education. Five teachers will review materials periodically for content and make recommendations as to which should be entered in the VERB system. (See attachments # 2 & 3)

In October, one hundred and sixty resources were available through VERB for use in Vermont classrooms. Retrieval strategies had been aided by over forty workshops on VERB that were provided statewide by the Project Coordinator. The project has, through natural momentum, exceeded the boundaries of the planning and pilot are stage. (See attachment # 4)

Few opportunities were missed during the summer and autumn when promotion of VERB was provided. The Vermont Education Association held a three day convention in October, and VERB was given a display area with indexes provided, a microfiche reader available and plenty of VERB microfiche to view. Over one hundred teachers in one day were given a brief description of the new NIE-sponsored service available to them.

A Leadership Conference, also VEA funded, was another opportunity for the Project Coordinator to promote materials.

Each of the six resource collectors also provided workshops, private conferences with superintendents and principals, and faculty in-service sessions as each person's schedule permitted. Together, they totalled 150 "working contacts" in addition to those provided by the Project Coordinator.

Resources already in place, such as the Resource Agent Program funded under Title IV C, Title I and the Mini and Maxi Grants awarded to LEA's for innovative programs have been tapped for inclusion in VERB.

The Resource Agent Program has proven itself among Vermont teachers to be of vital value. The immediacy of materials and ideas presented by these carefully selected and trained resource agents has helped rural teachers immensely in shaping new and more effective methods of instruction. Geared predominantly to the needs of elementary school teachers, Resource Agents journey throughout Vermont when they are requested. They demonstrate the use of materials they have devised and usually leave the teachers who attend with specific resources to use in their respective schools. All expenses for these workshops are provided by the program.

The Mini Grant Projects encourage Vermont classrooms to embark on new, unprecedented learning activities which can then be shared with other schools when completed. These classrooms have created health education programs of enduring value, and environmental education programs that can be used in many landscapes and programs, as well as numerous other projects. Recreation projects, such as the construction of a small barn on the field behind one rural schoolhouse have been funded in the past. Some projects do not fit into a data base but others are appropriately disseminated this way. There are 334 Mini Grants that have been funded and reached completion in the past twenty four months. Each of these is being individually contacted for resources that may have been developed; e.g., a Fox Fire publication in which school children interviewed local editors, mailmen, town historians, or a field trip guide that lists Vermont journeys that teach environmental skills - and are formant for lack of a dissemination method.

The Special Purpose Grant has directly achieved its first objective:

<u>To develop a Vermont Resource Base which will provide access to printed and visual resources, model programs and human resources</u>.

It has indirectly achieved another objective:

To develop and implement a training program for State Department personnel in the utilization and dissemination of information.

An in-service training day for Department Consultants has been conducted on the VERB project, with awareness of its resources and service to rural schools an ongoing objective to any consultant-oriented activity.

Two objectives stated in the 1976-1977 Special Purpose Grant Proposal by Dr. Tilley have not yet been realized.

The objective that reads:

"To provide State Department personnel and local education agency personnel with computer searches of ERIC and other national resource bases"

has not been met within the Department, because a terminal is not available and the cost of purchasing a terminal has been rejected by the Commissioner. Alternate methods, including manual searches and the use of a computer terminal in New Hampshire are currently employed.

The objective that relates to NIE development of a capacity building grant proposal, has not yet been developed due to the fact that there are not yet sufficient resources in place to support this capacity building activity. That also explains why Vermont was awarded a second Special Purpose Grant. In achieving the creation of a print-based resource system this year, Vermont is ready to reach next for the human resource capacity, the vital link between knowledge and application. With both "systems" in place capacity building becomes a viable reality.

To gauge the total activity in processing of VERB microfiche to date, elementary school teachers are finally getting resources that serve their needs. Defined as classroom "hands on" resources rather than the products of research per se, the majority of items in VERB are specific, "do-ing" activities that should prompt the teacher to implement a new approach to an old, and quite possibly boring, lesson. There are resources for the high school teacher as well, but it appears from our relatively brief experience under this Special Purpose Grant, that elementary educators are motivated to use resources more often.

These are where the resource materials budgets are often lowest and the classrooms are often isolated in landscapes that are frequently inaccessible in winter. Resources,

badly needed, always appear to be provided with a twist. Even VERB, on microfiche, has to either convert the hard-core isolated educators by providing material printed out, or has to forget them. The last eight months have produced credibility with these somewhat hard-to-please educators.

VERB has become successful this year because of the quality of the information in it. Most users were motivated to use the "system" because they read the abstract of an entry from another Vermont teacher, who was cited as the source, and were impressed with the kind of ideas outlined.

We created an index that could be handed out at workshops, to librarians, to mail with VERB microfiche orders, or whenever the opportunity allowed. Vermont is small enough and word travels fast enough for this to have some effect within five months. Many new materials for possible entry in VERB are being mailed from classrooms directly to the Project Coordinator because of a successful promotional effort from September through November. Credibility is now dependent on "turn-around time" on orders that improved when a VERB collector/processor worked strenuously during the month of December to fill back orders.

The value of VERB is not questioned. It is rapidly proving its success with those teachers who have little opportunity to communicate ideas among themselves. The happy result has been consistent growth in orders and use of the VERB project by an expanding number of"customers." (See attachment # 5)

"Institutionalization" of the system, has also shown promise. Many Department Consultants are relatively inexperienced with the microfiche aspect of information storage. The aforementioned in-service training session with various Education Consultants was a step forward in establishing the concept of microfiched resources as the most spatially economical method of storing and retrieving a growing resource base. Several dissemination methods of the Department are not suited to the microfiche method, either because the material is rapidly outdated and related to "policy" concerns rather than enduring need, or because plastic cards are not within the acceptable limits of the audience served. However, there is an increased conversion to microfiche storage of significant educational resources within the Department. Health Education Manuals, In-Service Teacher Training Manuals, and Legal Education Guides (see attached index) are being stored for future use when the original printed copies are no longer available or when a current classroom need is not met by anything else in the mail.

Another area of key interest is "Adult Basic Education." As described by its Director, this program is the only one offered by the Department of Education that teaches reading and writing skills to a potential work force. The Governor is promoting this labor force as an incentive for industries relocating to the Green Mountain State. So, this one program has significant economic implications and can use VERB as a source of materials for individual tutorial work with illiterate Vermont adults. As one middle-aged man explained to the Secretary of the Agency of Human Resources, "Sometimes I get tired of eating in Howard Johnson's, but it's the only place where the menu is illustrated and I can point to the pictures."

One method we developed for establishing some concept of the VERB service was to return copies of microfiched materials to the schools which had created the original material. This was achieved in September, and superintendents in the school regions involved were impressed, and their cooperation insured.

The personnel involved in this project were: a half time Coordinator, a Librarian-Indexer, and six collectors whose weekly schedules were from five to twenty hours. The activities for the Coordinator and Indexer often exceeded half time status, particularly during the intensive in-service workshop schedules of September, October, and November.

Nothing invested in this State is wasted. VERB, a small microfiche system in one drawer, already outranks ERIC in the number of orders, although ERIC fills almost sixty such filing drawers. There must be a reason.

Vermont is unique. VERB is also unique. Within eight months it has justified itself, and new additions are being assessed and abstracted currently. It has become self-maintaining.

The practical application of the microfiche process to the far flung resource needs of Vermont educators has proven its value in this rather unique year of experiment and success with VERB. This Special Purpose Grant was special. In fact it provided an opportunity to solve an established need for "homemade" resources that provided realistic goals and activities with a common frame of reference from creator to user.

TO: Karen McCarthy

FROM: Muriel Bohne, Resource Collector

DATE: November 2, 1977

SUBJECT: Summary of Activities - November 1, 1976 - June 30, 1977

Personal visits to superintendents to promote VERB	6
Southeast Regional Superintendents Meeting	1
Personal visits to principals of elementary and secondary schools (initial and follow-up)	
Jr. and Sr. High School	10
Elementary	41
Personal consultations with individual teachers and librarians	34
Faculty meetings addressed	13
Planning meetings with VERB workers	6
Workshop Presentations	4
Telephone consultations (long distance) and follow-ups (No record of number of local calls)	45
Principal's (Supervisory Districts) meetings	6
Penny Madison — Meetings addressed	6
Alice Chapman — Meetings addressed (Materials submitted are listed on following sheets)	6
Jean McWaters — Sending in her report directly to you	

In addition to the materials I collected, I read, evaluated and did abstracts on that large pile of material Betty Douglas submitted-I didn't count them.

Materials Submitted

SUBJECT	NO. OF ITEMS	SCHOOL SUBMITTING
Achievement	3	2 West Rupert & Guilford
Alcohol Education	3	Workshops
Awards	1	1 Southwest Supervisory District
Audio-Visual Aids	1	1 Springfield
Art	8	2 Bennington & Manchester
Camping	1	1 Manchester
Carpentry	2	2 Molly Stark Monument
Career Education	1	1 Bennington
Community Relations	2	2 Molly Stark Monument
Discipline	1	1 Shaftsbury
Environmental Education	2	2 Wilmington & Shaftsbury
Games	4	3 Guilford & Bennington & Manchester
Home Economics	1	1 Manchester & Bennington
Language Arts	7	4 N. Bennington & Wilmington & Guilford
Local History	3	2 Bennington & Wilmington
Mathematics	12	5 Bennington, Brattleboro, Guilford Manchester & Wilmington
Poetry	1	1 St. Michaels & Brattleboro
Reading	5	4 Mt. Anthony High School
Record Keeping	1	1 Guilford & Manchester
Science	6	5 N. Bennington, Wilmington, current workshop, Bennington, Monument & Wilmington
Composition	4	3 Brattleboro, Wilmington & Molly Stark
Music	1	Workshop - Dover
Social Studies	1	1 Brattleboro - Green Street

Total Different Subjects 31

Total Different Schools 18

I hope this is what you want.

Best wishes,
Muriel

Materials Submitted

SUBJECT	NO. OF ITEMS	SCHOOL SUBMITTING
Achievement	3	2 West Rupert Guilford
Alcohol Education	3	1 Southwest Supervisory District
Awards	1	1 Springfield
Audio-Visual Aids	1	1 Bennington & Manchester
Art	8	

CRITERIA FOR SUBMISSION OF MATERIALS

TO VERB

(VERMONT EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE BASE)

1. Scope of Content

   Any preschool, elementary- secondary, or post-secondary education content area is acceptable.

2. Scope of Interest

   Resources should be of direct or practical use to a teacher or administrator.

   Resources should contain materials which would be of interest to educators throughout the State. If it is a resource which can be used only at a local level, it should be submitted only if it could be used as a model for similar resources in other parts of the State.

   The resource should contain materials relevant to current priorities, problems, or interests in education.

3. Type of Resource

   Initially, the resource base will include only reproducible materials. Non-print materials (tapes, filmstrips, game boards, etc.) are not acceptable at this time. However, reproducible descriptions or diagrams of such materials or descriptions of the process used to develop them are suitable.

4. Quality of Content

   Resources should be submitted with sufficient explanation to allow other teachers to adapt or adopt the resource for their own use.

   Resources should be as concise as possible.

   Resources should not require unreasonably expensive or hard-to-find materials for implementation by other teachers. Information should be provided concerning availability (name and address of supplier, cost, etc.) of any additional materials needed for using resource.

   The resource should be something that has been tried in the school or classroom.

5. Legibility and Reproducibility

   If possible, resources should be type-set, typewritten, xeroxed, or mimeographed. They must be easily readable. Two legible copies are required. Originals will be returned to submitter if requested.

6. Length of Resource

There is no length requirement or limit to resources. One-page descriptions of teaching ideas are acceptable, as are lengthy curriculum guides, etc.

7. Uniqueness of Resource

The resource should not duplicate materials already included in the resource base.

The resource should not be copyrighted. If portions of copyrighted materials are included in the resource, be sure to credit the source.

****

If you have any questions concerning the suitability of any resource for submission to VERB, contact either:

Betty Douglas (Resource Collector - Worked from November
Addison-Rutland Media Center 1, 1976 - July 1, 1977)
Hydeville, Vermont 05750
265-8877

Betsy Hoppes (Resource Coordinator - Worked from July
State Department of Education 1, 1976 - November 1, 1976)
Montpelier, Vermont 05602
828-3161

STATE OF VERMONT
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
MONTPELIER

Attachment 3

DATE: October 13, 1977

TO: Mary Ann Brennan and Karen McCarthy

SUBJECT: Requisition Of Materials For VERB

FROM: Jerry A. Asselin

Effective today the following practices shall be followed before any materials are placed in the VERB System.

In order to assure quality in content, format and English usage the materials will be reviewed by the individual(s) listed below and released when in their opinion the documents are suitable for placement on fiches. The reviewers will receive the materials already prepared exactly as they are to be placed in the information system.

1. All materials developed as a result of grant activities in the Division of Federal Assistance - Mary Perry
2. Materials in Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services - C. Drussel Coffin
3. Vocational-Technical materials and all other materials developed as a result of Division grant activities - Barbara M. Gutheil
4. Staff development - inservice education - Henry Bissex
5. Adult Basic Education - Sandra B. Robinson
6. School Accounting - Peter Ryan
7. Child Nutrition Programs - Banba Foley
8. Basic Competencies - Esther J. Urie
9. All materials pertinent to Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Dr. Karlene V. Russell
10. Gifted-Talented, Research Documents, Studies, etc. - Dr. Herbert Tilley
11. Materials prepared by local staff members that do not fall into above categories - A committee of five teachers will be named by Dr. Russell and meet at the call of the VERB Coordinator for this purpose. Committee members shall be reimbursed at the rate of $7.00 per hour. The ERIC Coordinator shall immediately take the steps necessary to consult with Dr. Russell to identify and invite appropriate teachers to institute this committee. When the task has been completed, a report shall be given her immediate supervisor.

When the VERB Coordinator has questions as to who is the most appropriate reviewer for given materials she should consult with either her immediate supervisor or the Director, Division of Federal Assistance.

cc: All Individuals Listed Above
Division Directors
Deputy Commissioner
Robert Kenny - Chairman, Task Force on Dissemination

GAA/pvs

LIST OF RESOURCE COORDINATOR MEETINGS

February 1977

Castleton State College Library

April 1977

Castleton State College
Bennington Superintendent's Meeting
Townshend Principal's Meeting

May 1977

Right to Read Leaders - Waterbury
Sugarbush Inn - Education Conference
Fair Haven Principal's Meeting
Green Mountain College - Vermont Library Association

June 1977

University of Vermont - Reading Seminar
Castleton College - Education Course

July 1977

U V M - Media Class

August 1977

Vocational Teachers Workshop - Burlington
Career Education Conference - Castleton
Vermont Education Association Seminar
Leadership Conference - Randolph
Hinesburg Elementary School - Staff Workshop

September 1977

Johnson Elementary School - Staff Workshop
Windham Southeast Supervisory Union Meeting - Brattleboro
Spaulding High School - Barre Teachers Meeting
Springfield Regional Library Meeting
Derby Elementary School
Northfield Elementary School
Essex Junction Regional Library Meeting
Adult Basic Ed. Workshop - Goddard College

October 1977

Vermont Library Association Regional Meeting - Randolph
Windham Northeast In-Service Workshop
South Burlington In-Service - Chamberlin School
South Burlington Central School
South Hero Elementary School - In-Service

U V M - Graduate Class
Shelburne Middle School - Teachers Meeting
Vermont Education Association Convention
Sharon Elementary School
Union 36 Elementary School - Waits River

November 1977

Champlain Valley Union High School Faculty Meeting
Johnson State College - Science Class
Right to Read Leaders - Shelburne
Boulder Lodge School - Handicapped
South Royalton Elementary School
Georgia Material Review Session - with Librarians
Burlington High School - Teachers Meeting

December 1977

St. Johnsbury Material Review Session
Orchard School - Burlington - Materials for VERB Session
In-Service Workshop for Department Consultants
Orchard School - Teachers Meeting

VERB USE 1977

Month	Microfiche	Hard Copy	Requesters
May	18	145	5
June	123	330	12
July	151	57	7
August	82	881	28
September	264	772	37
October	224	154	22
November	931	1,353	74
December 19th	650	594	64

Attachment 6

STATE OF VERMONT
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
MONTPELIER

DATE: November 21, 1977

TO: Department Staff

SUBJECT: Suggested Policy for use of Microfiche Readers

FROM: Karen McCarthy KMC

Any user of VERB or ERIC is apt to need a microfiche reader in order to read their packet of materials. Therefore, five readers are available from the Department of Education's ERIC/VERB System, to ease this information exchange process. Each reader may be kept for one month, and longer "loans" may be arranged. The user is responsible for returning the reader in operating order. Each reader must be signed out. If the "users" change, notice must be given to the ERIC/VERB system before any "swapping" occurs. A list of available readers in local schools is also provided by the system.

gm

Attachment 7

STATE OF VERMONT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
MONTPELIER
05602

December 28, 1977

REVISED POLICY ON REQUEST FOR MICROFICHE OR HARDCOPY FROM THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE INFORMATION CENTER AND VERMONT EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE BASE (ERIC/VERB).

Increasing demands on the ERIC and VERB Systems mean a corresponding cost in responding to these demands, namely mounting expenditures for "hardcopy and microfiche." In an effort to acknowledge the reality of these costs, while encouraging broader use of the two resource bases, effective January 3, 1978, elementary and secondary school personnel in Vermont will continue to receive microfiche and hardcopy (up to fifty pages per calendar year), at no cost to themselves if materials are ordered from and mailed to an elementary or secondary school address. All other individuals or institutions using the system, as well as requests in excess of 50 pages, as indicated above, will be charged ten cents per microfiche and page of hardcopy.

Gerard A. Asselin, Director
Division of Federal Assistance

gm/

Attachment 8

Curriculum Workshop
Catamount School
Bennington, Vermont 05201

November 4, 1977

Ms. Karen McCarthy
State of Vermont
Department of Education
Montpelier, Vermont 05602

Dear Karen:

Here is a run down of the number of contacts I have made since starting with the VERB program last April.

1 Formal presentations to the faculties of the Pownal, Woodford and Catamount elementary schools. (46 teachers)
2 Gave a half day workshop for teachers of the SWVSD in Pownal this past August. (15 attended)
3 During the course of my job I am in personal contact with at least 90% of the teachers at the elementary level on a weekly basis. This covers the whole SWVSD, from Pownal to Arlington. There are 127 classroom teachers.

Take Care

Jeanne A. McSitter

PS My news letter goes out once a month to all teachers in the elementary schools.